

1. How the Intercultural Leadership Initiative Works.

The Intercultural Leadership Initiative (ILI) is a grassroots project that was started by local community people in the winter of 1998-99 as a proactive response to a generation's old issue of conflict between American Indians and their neighbors in the heart of Wisconsin's great Northwoods. The ILI mission is to help ease racial tensions in school districts by promoting cultural understanding through inter-cultural experiences at the elementary school level. The ILI was started by Project Director Bob Kovar while he was president of the board of directors at the North Lakeland Discovery Center, a small local non-profit he helped to start in 1996. ILI started as a small coalition of two local schools and quickly expanded to include 5 area schools (teachers, parents, and administrators), community organizations, churches, businesses, individuals and others representing our diverse cultural make-up. ILI staff has always been comprised of adults from all communities. In the summer of 2002 due to its increasing growth and interest in expanding into other communities throughout the region, ILI moved to Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, Inc. (GLITC), a non-profit located in Lac du Flambeau. GLITC is the fiscal sponsor for ILI. In addition, the GLITC board (Tribal Chairs for 10 Tribes in Wisconsin and 1 in Michigan) presides as the board for ILI. **ILI receives no financial support from GLITC.** ILI staff (currently 4 full-time and 2 part-time) are responsible for all fundraising, local organizing, program and curricular development and outreach to other tribal communities throughout the Midwest, where interest in ILI has been running very high. While each community has their own individual set of circumstances, the stories of lack of academic achievement, coupled with the effects of racism and prejudice, are universal. ILI provides an innovative, culturally competent approach to giving all of our students the tools they need to resolve conflict, appreciate diverse cultures, discover their connectedness to schools as mentors and role models, and become empowered to change systems and breakdown barriers. ILI is now evolving into a premier character education effort that provides a critical niche of instruction for our students that our schools have neither the resources nor time to teach. ILI is funded by the efforts of ILI staff, through grant-writing, giving presentations to organizations across Wisconsin, mail campaigns and other strategies. In the 2005-2006 school year, we were funded by 50 organizations and over 100 individuals.

ILI is an on-going project. We see ILI as a long-range generational effort that needs to be in existence long enough to break the cycle of fear and prejudice that is the result of hundreds of years of history.

2. The Community Need That Our Proposal Addresses And How The Focus Was Determined.

The ILI was started in 1999. It grew out of controversies surrounding the re-awakening of the exercise of off-reservation hunting, fishing and gathering rights of bands of the Chippewa Indian tribes across upper Michigan, Wisconsin, and Minnesota in the mid-1980's. For years in the middle and late 1980's, crowds of opponents of tribal fishing rights gathered at boat landings across Northern Wisconsin at night in the early spring to demonstrate against the Chippewa fishermen. Racist epithets and slogans were shouted, rocks and debris were hurled at the fishermen in the boats, and shoving matches were barely contained by law enforcement officers. The attitudes at the landings ran high, and were carried over into other aspects of community life. Children's sports teams were removed from playing against reservation teams, verbal and physical fights erupted in the schools, local businesses were hostile, and the tribal community was blamed for a litany of bad publicity in the Northwoods. Nowhere were the local anti-Indian feelings and expressions more virulent than in and around the Lakeland area in north central Wisconsin. For generations, American Indians were treated as second class citizens in the area and these feelings would often erupt into violence in the local high school where students were forced to be inside the same walls and mix socially for the first time in their lives. The treaty rights controversy only ignited an ember that had simmered for many years. Community tensions ran high on the issue, added to the ongoing, more latent racial tensions. These bitter feelings transferred into more years of ever escalating confrontations and violence in the local high school, making learning, particularly for American Indian students, an extremely difficult task. For generations, American Indian students have graduated at a far lesser rate, have had much lower GPA's, higher drop-out, suspension and expulsion rates than their peers from surrounding communities.

These issues of treaty rights, as well as cultural and class differences have caused fear, suspicion, mistrust, social segregation, cultural prejudice and even violent confrontation. The reality of racism and its effects on socio-economic life has left generations of American Indians disproportionately higher at-risk than the general population for referral to the criminal justice system, substance abuse, special educational needs, academic and social failure, broken families and spirits. All of these issues exist in every Tribal community in Wisconsin. Where tribal students are part of the public school population, these realities clash with the non-Native world and contribute to a difficult climate and educational experience for American Indian youth. The No Child Left Behind Act has unfortunately added to the misery as linear thinking, academic testing has become the most important aspect of many school's curriculum in order for them to continue receiving federal monies. Many studies have shown that this is not the way Indian children learn best. NCLB foregoes opportunities for teachers to connect with students in a personal way (as they are pressed to have their students pass the tests) and reduces their effort in presenting their materials in a way that addresses a variety of learning styles and thought processes. As a result, student failures are epidemic and this is the beginning of a very short slippery slope for too many of our youth. Our educational system is out of balance. The ILI is an effort to provide that balance by allowing students a chance to explore the range of physical, spiritual,

emotional and intellectual experiences they need to be healthy human beings. We employ a very wide range of strategies, including interpersonal and intercultural experiences, American Indian language and storytelling, substance abuse prevention, mentoring, and community service and leadership opportunities to help build a healthy understanding of life in a diverse world. There are many positive things going on in our communities that our children need access to for this balance to occur and ILI is organizing the resources to be able to bring these experiences to our children. Thankfully through much effort, elders in the Tribes have preserved language and tradition and are actively passing these on to younger generations in their communities. These are powerful tools of healing and strength for Tribal youth and many studies have shown the importance of cultural identity in grounding young people's sense of self which helps them make positive decisions in their lives. ILI actively includes these teachings in our curriculum. We started ILI in our local area high school, Lakeland Union High School (LUHS) as a pilot/model that could be replicated in other tribal communities in Wisconsin. The ILI program is trying to help our communities see the power of a balanced educational experience as well as the importance of understanding life in our diverse world. We believe that many of the disproportional effects listed above can only change when we look at educating the "whole child". ILI is well positioned to aide our schools in this effort. Area schools and communities have embraced our efforts and this allows us the opportunities to showcase how this can work. The current ILI project serves ten rural communities providing students to the four consolidated K-8 elementary schools feeding Lakeland Union High School, a district covering an area of 800 square miles, one of the largest school districts east of the Mississippi River. Lac du Flambeau Public School, located on the reservation, has a 95% American Indian student population. The other three elementary school students are 99% of European ancestry, creating an essentially segregated K-8 school system. There is no middle school in the district, and no programs made available to grade school students to bring them together before they enter LUHS. ILI began with 10 students in 1998-1999 and currently serves 750+ students in 4th-12th grades in the LUHS District. We do this via 3-daylong sessions annually for teams of students in grades 4-8. We also have two teams of LUHS ILI students that meet alternately every other week for 30 minutes during the high school day. All ILI curriculum is designed by ILI staff with an emphasis on cultural understanding, conflict resolution and making positive choices in our lives.

Many factors play a role in keeping our community in a cycle of dysfunction: 4 independent elementary schools, each with its own school board and administration, that feed students into Lakeland Union High School (LUHS) with few opportunities for the students to meet before starting 9th grade and no shared curricula; students coming from a very large geographical area; an increase of the student body from 200-600 (elementary) to 1,000 (high school); a different daily class routine; coming from a fairly homogeneous socio-economic community to an extremely diverse one; and an introduction to people of a different ethnicity.

According to high school records, during the first semester of the 2003/2004 school year, there were a total of 109 suspensions from LUHS, over 10% of the student population. Compare this to 87 suspensions for the entire 2002/2003 school year. Wisconsin's high school dropout rate is 2.1%, Vilas County has an 8.6% dropout rate, but between 1993 and 2002 the overall dropout rate at LUHS was 17%.

According to the 2000 Census, 24.3% of Wisconsin American Indians live below the poverty level, compared to 8.7% for all races in the state. The 2000 Census also shows that 21.6% of Lac du Flambeau residents aged 25 and older were high school graduates, compared to 76.7% of American Indians and 85.1% for all other races in the State of Wisconsin. Only 12.5% of Lac du Flambeau population over aged 25 have an Associates degree or higher; 77.3% of those going on to college dropped-out before earning a degree. Between 1993 and 2002 the graduation rate, including HSED program, for American Indian students was 66.5%.

During the 2002/2003 school year, the average grade point average for American Indian students at LUHS was 1.922, compared to 2.937 for other students. Also, 34.4% of grades given to American Indian students were a D or lower; compared to 11.4% for other students. During 2nd semester of that year, 46.7% of American Indian 9th graders received Ds or below, compared to 11.6% for their neighbors students. During the same time period, 31.2%, 26.7%, and 22.1% of American Indian 10th, 11th, and 12th graders, respectively received Ds or below, compared to 11.2%, 12.1%, and 7.8% for other students. Graduation rates at LUHS for American Indian students remains around the 55% mark as compared to nearly 90% for all other students.

3. ILI Philosophy and Literature Review

The focus for ILI was determined by an extensive review of the literature on how best to deliver our program so it would be most effective.

The Wisconsin Youth Risk Survey (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2001) states that, "A youth's behavior is influenced by a complexity of experiences and influences. The positive influences that shape behavior are assets. These assets can protect youth from risk behaviors as well as promote healthy behaviors." The challenge for many youth prevention programs is to find a method for youth to access healthy behavior as an outcome when tempted or faced with reacting to a situation that involves high risk behaviors. A great deal of research is currently focused on understanding the concept of resilience or why some people do well with adverse situations and others do not. Resiliency is defined as the human capacity

to face, overcome, and be strengthened by experiences of adversity (Grotberg, 1997). Resilience proposes that prevention programs best succeed by focusing on the promotion of holistic health-emotional, social, physical, intellectual and spiritual (Benard, 2001). Understanding the characteristics of resilient individuals and the process of negotiating or mediating risk situations and the protective processes that enable positive outcomes should be the theoretical base for any sound prevention process. Experiential education is a major strategy for accomplishing holistic developmental outcomes (Hattie et al, 1997). Knowing and targeting the audience to be addressed is one of the attributes of successful prevention programs (Fetsch and Silliman, 2002) and accepting and addressing the fact that cultural styles of learning do not match the typical learning environment in our local schools (Swisher, 1991) enables the ILI program to be particularly successful among both American Indian youth as well as youth from other cultures.

Sandhu and Aspy conceptualized prejudice as the consequence of the complex interplay among three specific conditions. The first condition is the predisposition toward prejudicial pre-existing attitudes and societal biases such as ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism is the egotistical belief in the superiority of one's own ethnic group. A second condition is the predisposition to act prejudicially when it is a proper and rewarding response such as in competition. Individuals and societies react prejudicially when in competition because competitors strive to become better than one another. The third condition is that of fear. (Sandhu and Aspy, 1997, pg. 9). These conditions may be interacting in various ways, or may be present, or missing, to varying degrees and to differing intensities among individuals and within societies.

The gathering of individuals from a variety of cultures can therefore be stressful and may be prone to displays of prejudice and racism. Salzman and D'Andrea emphasize that school is the domain in which youth are most apt to gather with others of diverse cultures, hence it is the domain in which conflict arising from racial and cultural conflict is most likely to occur. "For instance, diversity may fuel conflict or mutual enrichment, fear or delightful and fruitful interaction, appreciation or the derogation of "others." (Salzman and D'Andrea, 2001, pg. 2)

The introduction of prejudice in a school setting can be a major deterrent to school connectedness and success for students of a different culture, therefore posing a risk factor for drug, alcohol, and other self-defeating behaviors (McNeely, 2002). It is critical that prejudice be addressed among all students prior to youth entering school situations where they will encounter students of other cultures.

The importance of strong bonds at school has also been demonstrated with findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (known as Add Health) a large, congressionally mandated study of adolescents in grades 7-12. More important than race, income or family structure as youth risk predictors, this study found that the quality and strength of connectedness between students and their schools was one of the most predictive factors of risky behavior. (The Institute for Youth Development, 1999.) Students who feel safe and a part of their school are less likely to participate in violence, use substances or engage in sexual activity at an early age. This connectedness raises students reported levels of emotional well being. (Blum & Rinehart, 1998).

CSAP's (Center for Substance Abuse Prevention) National Cross-Site Evaluation of 48 High-Risk Youth Programs (HRY), a five-year nationwide research project, found that being connected to school was even more powerful than being connected to family. **Most critically, however, connectedness to school is one of the most powerful protective factors a youth can possess. Similarly, just one school variable is identified as a risk factor: student prejudice** (when students felt rejected by other students). This is associated with both emotional distress and suicidality among both younger and older students. Consequently, student prejudice is a critical factor in establishing the protective factor of school connectedness. (EMT's *Prevention Tactics* 4:3, 2001, "Prevention Works!", online at www.emt.org)

Allport suggests that developing cooperative skills and attitudes in people facilitates changes of incorrect prejudicial views of others (1999). Furthermore, Kiselica states that teaching multiculturalism is an imperative step to reducing prejudice and changing the attitudes of young people that act prejudicially. However, learning multiculturalism is best learned through a group process model where information is absorbed both cognitively and experientially. Discussion and active learning processes combined with a non-judgmental environment is crucial to changes in behavior and attitude, not just knowledge. Finally, it is the utilization of self-reflection of experiences and personal attitudes to balance the active learning processes results in the ideal praxis. (Kiselica, 1999).

Kiselica states further that integrated groups requiring the joint effort of each member within focusing on a specific and necessary goal induce positive cognitive, affective, and behavioral changes. The interaction of group work requires reciprocity from all members. These relationships foster the development of respect for others who are different (Kiselica, 1999).

Learning theory suggests that providing information to youth with little experience can be a helpful learning tool, particularly when the emphasis of the informational approach is to "develop an accurate understanding of, and adherence to, such values as human dignity, justice, equality, and an appreciation of cultural differences" (Gabelko and Michaelis, 1981, pg. 11). However, simply providing information does little to alter behavior or attitude.

The intergroup contact approach improves upon information alone. Intergroup contact provides an environment for meeting others who are different from one another and the opportunity for youth to interact with one another. Learning is a

process of knowledge and skill acquisition rooted firmly in the contextual and experiential factors of a culture. (Vygotsky, 1978.) Learning also takes place through socialization and enculturation, both within and outside of the classroom (Li, 2003.) increasing the opportunities for misunderstanding culture among students educated within different systems, living in different geographic areas, or with differing traditions and life perspectives. Because learning is experientially-based, it is intrinsic to culture (Luria, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978) and the contexts in which that learning takes place. Context plays such a large role in learning that some research strongly suggests students be provided with the opportunity to gain new skills in the context in which it will be used (Saxe, 1989). Youth learn more readily when actively engaged in applying the skills and knowledge to solving real problems related to their lives, yet are challenged to expand and reconfigure pre-existing knowledge frameworks. Murrell (2001) advocates a dynamic and engaging pedagogy for students from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

The development of cognitive sophistication enhances personal reflection and understanding as well as broadening the individual's world-view and perspectives of others. The cognitive sophistication approach combines intergroup contact with experiential education, reflective thought, an opportunity to focus on shared goals and efforts, and the advantage of fostering communication among diverse groups of youth. Youth who develop cognitive sophistication are less likely to discriminate against others or support negative stereotypes and are more likely to alter their personal behavior to reflect positive changes in attitude and increased knowledge about others. Gabelko and Michaelis state, "This approach has much to recommend it, ... in developing cognitive sophistication, the individual grows in critical thinking skills, thereby learning to question and to seek out personal meaning through firsthand experience or investigation" (Gabelko and Michaelis, p. 12). The ILI program has developed a short test for discerning student attitude and behavior regarding cultural understanding and willingness to accept people from other cultures. This is one area in which ILI works to overcome prejudice within the school environment.

However, both prosocial involvement (Catalano, et al., 2002) and a strong sense of community are protective factors for youth. (Chavis et al., 1990) Furthermore, "When people share a strong sense of community they are motivated and empowered to change problems they face, and are better able to mediate the negative effects over things which they have no control," Chavis et al., (1990, p. 73) write. This theory suggests that programs that "...foster membership, increase influence, meet needs, and develop a shared emotional connection among community members" (Chavis et al., 1990, p. 73) can serve to instigate change and engage youth in healthy decision-making and action. Consequently, ILI provides a forum for prosocial action for youth addressing prejudice and cultural understanding, while strengthening a sense of community.

Finally, an important piece of work to add to this theory framework involves understanding the key role that interpersonal forgiveness can play in breaking cycles of violence. "...forgiveness may be the one of the least understood and yet potentially necessary acts required for a society to fully break a cycle of violence" (Hartwell, 2000). Involved as well is the well researched psychology on intergenerational post-traumatic stress disorder that arises as a result of a group of people being oppressed in extreme ways, such as during the Nazi Holocaust. "Many of the dynamics in effect in the Jewish experience are similar to those of the Native American experience, with the crucial exception that the world has not acknowledged the holocaust of Native people in this hemisphere. This lack of acknowledgement remains one of the stumbling blocks to the healing process of Native American people," (Duran and Duran, 1995). This, coupled with forced acculturation, has embedded injustices in the minds of many Native people in our community for generations. Perceived injustices by local European Americans due to tribal sovereignty and treaty rights only compounds these issues. Interpersonal forgiveness then becomes one of the tools we have to reconcile these long standing issues. Understanding the progression of psychological variables engaged in a process intervention on forgiveness is the basis of a 5 year study completed in 1992 (Enright et al, 1992). Understanding and using this process could help provide the social reconciliation tool needed to help students recognize how local, living history impacts their everyday interpersonal relationships.

ILI incorporates this whole complex range of strategies, techniques and philosophies into its curriculum with passion and deliberate effectiveness.

4. Specific Activities

Specifically, ILI is working to deliver programming for students to accomplish the ILI mission, goals and objectives. We will accomplish this by:

- Continuing to refine our current 4th-12th grade ILI Curriculum while creating new and innovative activities for student ILI sessions.
- Creating continuing opportunities for LUHS ILI students to serve as mentors, facilitators and role models for younger students.
- Continuing our community leadership in advocating, designing, coordinating and finding resources for the ILI Transition Program for students from all area schools who are making the critical transition between 8th grade and 9th grade.
- Establishing our LUHS ILI After School program to receive course credits for students.

- Continuing to implement the ILI After School Learning Center. This is a tutoring program that includes opportunities for teachers to build personal one-on-one relationships with students.
- Continuing to implement our extensive ILI Evaluation Plan, with the help of professional evaluators, in order to assess and describe outcomes for the growing number of other Indian communities interested in trying ILI in their schools.

1. ILI Curriculum

The ILI approach is to bring both elementary and high school students together in small teams for face-to-face sessions where they learn about each other's cultures, traditions, and the issues that have been barriers and caused conflict in the past. They learn these concepts through experiential active learning techniques, games, creative drama, talking circles, mentoring and service learning projects that encourage a sense of community and healthy risk-taking to solve problems.

ILI started in 1999 with ten students in 7th grade. We realized we needed to start younger and the following year we piloted a group of about twenty 4th grade students (they are currently freshman). We continued to follow the 7th grade students all the way through high school (100% of these students graduated last May), while adding an additional 4th grade group each year. Our strategy was to have students experience ILI for 5 years before they enter the high school. Since the fall of 2005, roughly ½ of the incoming freshman class at the high school have been through ILI for 5 years.

Students from 4th – 8th grades (currently about 500) in all schools are split into same-aged teams of about 20 students (approximately 50% of students on each team are American Indian, and the other 50% are students of European descent), and attend ILI sessions led by adults representing our diverse cultures. These professional facilitators help host sessions throughout the community in “neutral” facilities where students can explore these issues in a fun and safe atmosphere. Elementary teams of ILI students meet three times a year for a full day (7 hours) of activities. Sessions are held in October, January and April. ILI curriculum has been developed over the years, is grade specific, tied to a variety of academic standards and is always creative, fun and new for the students. This curriculum is modeled on vast amounts of research, as well as years of culturally diverse experience from community facilitators, that guides us towards the concepts that make programs effective in a multi-cultural setting.

In years past, the high school allowed ILI staff to hold weekly two hour sessions during the school day for incoming ILI students. This gave students regular access to advocates (ILI staff) and mentors (older ILI students) who helped ease this transition. The last two years, in order to “increase the number of instructional minutes to improve NCLB test scores”, the school has decreased ILI meetings during the school day to once, every other week for 30 minutes. This has had a direct negative effect, particularly on ILI LdF students, many of whom have told ILI staff that the only thing that keeps them coming to school is ILI. In order to correct this, students and ILI staff advocated for, and were granted permission to pilot, an ILI After-School Program that would meet for two hours after school each week on Wednesdays. The students have been so enthusiastic that they are meeting on Tuesdays and Thursdays as well! LUHS ILI high school students are trained as mentor/facilitators and work in teams at each elementary session. It is our hope that our success will push the school to consider actively integrating our methods into their classrooms. We will accomplish this by:

1. Working in collaboration with school and tribal administration to build ownership in this pilot project.
2. Designing and implementing a 36-week scope and sequence curriculum for students that will include:
 - a. Individual “IEP’s” developed by students and ILI mentors
 - b. A Tribal Track Curriculum: tribal governance, sovereignty, tribal justice system and laws
 - c. Developing a local tribal network of internship opportunities.
 - d. Facilitation and mentoring techniques and trainings.
 - e. Hands-on, experiential approach to learning.
3. Developing a sustainability plan for this project which includes:
 - a. Working with Nicolet Area Technical College to develop an Associates Degree in tribal government as well as an Associates Degree in facilitation/adventure-based instruction.
 - b. Working in partnership with the Tribe and the school districts to write grants to support this project.
 - c. Developing training opportunities for other tribal/school communities to develop similar programs.
 - d. Working with area businesses and employers to develop a local network of internship/apprenticeship opportunities.
 - e. Evaluation of the projects’ efficacy.
 - f. Working with school administrators to raise their level of cultural competency and awareness of limiting achievement issues.
 - g. Taking a leadership role in facilitating community meetings to assess needs and discuss culturally competent strategies and solutions.
 - h. Working with area teachers providing professional development opportunities.

Students will participate in activities in a safe environment with an emphasis on creating a fun learning environment and one in which each individual will investigate, research and strengthen their own cultural identity. The students will learn

how to lead and facilitate groups in a variety of ways. They will learn to plan program activities that emphasize, “discovery-learning” through spontaneity and creativity. They will become better “self-starters” by strengthening their self-confidence and self-esteem. Each activity will include stimulating all of our six senses. Students will practice decision making skills that will enhance their ability to serve as powerful and positive role models for their peers and for younger students in local elementary schools as well as other schools in Wisconsin, the Midwest and beyond. The students will practice skills and methods of personal and group conflict resolution. They will participate in discussions to help them better understand and to help them increase their awareness of the social and emotional climate around them. They will brainstorm ideas how they can take an increasing responsibility for making changes. The students will explore issues of racial conflict and examine methods others are using to resolve them and what other communities are doing to co-exist in harmony and peace.

2. ILI Mentoring Program

We are looking to design and implement a more intensive mentoring program between community adult facilitators and teachers and ILI high school students, ILI high school students and ILI elementary students, and 8th grade ILI students and 4th grade ILI students. We have found the mentoring experience to be one of the most powerful outcomes of the ILI experience. For younger students, older mentors provide a means to shatter age-old “rural myths and legends” that have persisted in our community. When young elementary students see American Indian students and students from other backgrounds as friends and mentors, it breaks down the notion that inter-cultural friendships can’t exist and paves the way for a new set of social norms. High school mentors have expressed profound experiences as mentors, realizing their power of influence and the high level of respect they receive from younger students during their ILI experiences. Some have even stated that if they could feel this important in others lives regularly; they would postpone or forego their experimentation with drugs or alcohol.

We are looking to implement a special ILI mentors program, pairing adults with high school students, these students with elementary students, and older elementary students with our youngest ILI students. Adult mentors will work one-on-one with high school students, teaching them facilitation and mentoring techniques to apply at their elementary ILI sessions. These high school students will be group leaders for their peers as well as one-on-one teachers for their elementary protégé’s. We hope to implement a number of special activities for this group, including a number of overnight retreats, outdoor adventures, development of a peacekeeping process in the high school and the development of a specific ILI mentors curriculum. The purpose is to develop a core of ILI leaders to be able to pass these skills from one ILI generation to the next, as well as to develop young adults who will pursue these activities into college and beyond.

3. ILI Transition Program

As part of the ILI/LUHS partnership, a more focused, intentional set of transition activities in cooperation with area elementary schools was established in the spring of 2004 for area 8th grade students. These transitional experiences fulfilled a number of important needs for students:

1. It was the culminating elementary ILI experience for 8th grade students. It provided the experiential link between grade school and high school.
2. An experiential introduction to the LUHS social affective overlay exemplified by Journeys program and other efforts at LUHS.
3. Students were “handed off” from elementary school (their 8th grade teachers participated) to the high school (9th grade LUHS staff also participated).
4. Students were mixed by age, culture, school, and interest and given the opportunity to get to know each other and their teachers in a social context.

When we started this program, ILI had to pay for the entire Transition Day (food, busing, even teachers to come!) and now the schools are slowly taking over the costs as they see the benefits of the project. The success of this effort has led to a continuation of the area-wide Transition Committee (with representation from all schools and ILI staff) which meets monthly and is actively planning transition activities and events for the upcoming spring/summer/fall.

Goals

1. To develop the structure for a continuing intergenerational, community/school transition program.
2. To develop curriculum based on local cultural experiences and history to teach self awareness and awareness of self within a group, to culturally diverse groups.
3. To provide a bridge between 8th and 9th grade in the physical context of the LUHS outdoor lab and the emotional context of old, safe connections between students and their 8th grade faculty and new connections with their 9th grade faculty.
4. To provide a context for elementary and high school teachers to come together to co-facilitate experiences for their outgoing/incoming students.
5. To provide opportunity for community members to share their knowledge of community and culture with these students.

Features:

- Taught by area middle school, high school staff, LUHS student mentors and ILI facilitators; team teaching is encouraged. Adults model teamwork/collaboration and have the benefit of knowing some of the students in their class. This may help students, associating familiar adults with a positive experience at the high school.
- Project-based, experiential learning model that promotes inquiry and team work.
- Program runs from 9:00-3:00 and includes lunch so that students have a chance to socialize in smaller groups.
- High School student mentors or teacher assistants assigned to classroom teachers will help. Students may be paid and/or earn credit. Mentors will follow up with students during the school year, priority given to 9th graders. Mentors may visit elementary schools during the school year to connect with students. There is a large pool of ILI and Journey high school mentors already trained as mentors and some with facilitator experience as well.
- Class enrollment is balanced for representation by each elementary school. All area 8th grade students would be eligible to participate.

Activities

- In late April/early May we will travel to each school to introduce the whole transition experience to each 8th grade class. These sessions will last approximately 45 minutes. We will facilitate some sample activities with them as well as introduce an element that they will be responsible for bringing when the whole group meets as one for the first time in May.
- May session: All area 8th grade students to the high school forest for a day of experiential activities facilitated by ILI staff, high school staff, grade school staff and ILI high school student mentors. Students are split into “families” led by high school teachers: this will be their homerooms for the next 4 years.
- September session: Freshman orientation day. Culminating transition experience during the first day of school, revisit the school forest and process all activities. Set the stage for the new year.

5. ILI Evaluation Plan

ILI has taken place over the past seven years and evaluation has been mostly process and anecdotal measures. In anticipation of applying for Model Program status under the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP), a school-wide research study was performed in the fall of 2002. The results, compiled by the Wisconsin Clearinghouse for Prevention Resources, brought additional quantitative measures as well as the introduction of control groups. Also, an assessment tool that directly measures changes in substance use and abuse was added December, 2003. As a result of the assistance of the Wisconsin State Incentive Grant, ILI now has a comprehensive and meaningful evaluation plan in place to provide quantitative measures for specific outcomes, along with process measurements. We now need to recruit professional evaluators to take this great quantity of information, analyze it and communicate outcomes in a professionally relevant and statistically correct manner.

We use evaluation information **internally** for continued program improvement and effectiveness, building on the process oriented evaluation that has been in place since the beginning of ILI. The ILI coalition and Advisory Committee, providing guidance and feedback, is a system of constant process evaluation. This feedback has often led to changes in the delivery of ILI, starting seven years ago when the coalition recommended beginning programming at a younger grade than the original 7th graders. More recently, feedback led to holding sessions at the high school for the transitioning 8th graders and adding the “real-life” historical perspective to the high school curriculum. Outcome results are shared with school partners and our community in order to further refine or revise strategies. Our project uses this knowledge **externally** for numerous local, state and regional presentations to disseminate lessons learned and increase public awareness of issues. We hope to assist with the many other tribal communities with similar needs in answer to their call for help. Our lessons learned and processes are being used by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to create a network of hope, the American Indian Student Achievement Network, for administrators with tribal students in their schools statewide. Our evaluation will also be used to help ILI apply for “Model Program” status through the Center For Substance Abuse Prevention. If we can accomplish this goal, access of ILI in other communities and opportunities of replication will increase dramatically. In our travels to reservation communities around the Midwest, the stories of poor academic achievement for American Indian students, and the reasons why, are hauntingly similar. ILI is a process and an opportunity to do something different that seems to give hope. It is our wish to follow through and make our program available for all communities to make their own.

Items attached:

1. Summary of Major ILI Accomplishments and Recognitions
2. ILI 2006-2007 Budget
3. ILI 2005-06 Sources of Income
4. Bibliography

ATTACHMENT #1: A Summary of ILI major accomplishments and awards

1. Building the program from 10 seventh grade students in 1998-99 school year to more than 630 fourth through twelfth grade students in 2004-2005 school year.
2. Building a local community (tribal and other) coalition of schools, administrators, teachers, parents, service organizations, faith-based organizations, businesses, individuals that supports ILI with dollars, volunteers, guidance and other means of support. Most importantly, many of these organizations were enemies over treaty rights previous to the development of ILI.
3. Increasing pro-social and sense of community indicators amongst ILI students and improving relations between Indian students and their peers.
4. Our first group of ILI students, who began ILI with us when they were in 7th grade, were seniors in 2004. Of this group, all of the students graduated in May. This compares to overall high school graduation rates of only 66% (2004) for American Indian students and 87% for students from other communities.
5. ILI successfully brought together administrators and teachers from the four feeder elementary schools and the high school to form the Lakeland Transition Committee. This committee is a revitalization of an earlier effort to provide activities for 7th and 8th grade students transitioning into the high school. In May 2005, 2006 and 2007, we hosted over 250 students in the LUHS school forest. 14 elementary school staff, 18 LUHS staff, 6 community team leaders, 8 LUHS student mentors and 6 ILI staff provided the leadership and facilitation for the day. The Transition Committee worked with LUHS administration to break the students into 17 groups for the day, representing their homerooms for the next 4 years-each of these groups was led by their new homeroom teacher.
6. 2004 was the first year for our annual "Friends of ILI" membership drive. We had 75 people sign up as members and they donated \$7600 to our efforts. So far this year we have over 100 members giving over \$15,000.
7. We were able to attract the interest of Wisconsin's highest ranking educator, Elizabeth Burmaster, Superintendent of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. She traveled up here to visit our program in action in May 2004.
8. We shared our ILI model November 2004 on the Stockbridge/Munsee Indian Reservation in the central part of Wisconsin where similar issues have existed for generations. As a result, they formed the Youth Empowerment Program(YEP), and have implemented a limited number of sessions for students modeled on our program philosophy.
9. Our working relationship with Lakeland Union High School (LUHS) administration continues to strengthen as they have now embraced integrating ILI into their overall curricular plans.
10. ILI was the only Wisconsin program nominated by the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services for the 2003 Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program Award For Innovative Programs, a nation-wide program.
11. ILI staff was nominated by the Wisconsin Indian Education Association in January 2005 for the Ford Foundation "Leadership For A Changing World", a \$100,000 award.
12. Received the Department of Public Instruction Superintendent's "Standing Up For Rural Schools, Communities and Libraries Award" presented by Elizabeth Burmaster at the Wisconsin Small Schools Conference in Wisconsin Rapids in March, 2005.
13. ILI was one of seven awardees from across the nation to receive the Legend Leadership Award from the Dale Earnhardt Foundation in Mooresville, North Carolina in April 2005.
14. Project Director Bob Kovar was awarded a special recognition by the Lac du Flambeau Tribe's Education Committee at the annual Eagle Feather ceremony honoring Lac du Flambeau students graduating from Lakeland Union High School in June 2005.
15. Project Director Bob Kovar was appointed by Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster to the Advisory Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Programs. This 18 member Advisory Council has legislative responsibility for AODA programs, grants and services, but not in isolation from other related youth risk behaviors including: Tobacco Prevention, AIDS/HIV/STD's; Violence Prevention; Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Youth Suicide Prevention. This is a 3 year appointment and members may serve two consecutive terms.
16. ILI was featured in segments in two Wisconsin-based television shows in 2004-05: "In Wisconsin" (Wisconsin Public TV Production) and "Into the Outdoors" (Discover MediaWorks Production).
17. In January 2007, Bob Kovar received the "Giraffe Award" for from the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families-one of three awardees statewide.
18. In March 2007, Bob Kovar was appointed to the Advisory Board of the Alliance For Wisconsin Youth.
19. In April 2007, nominated by Wisconsin Dept of Health and family Services to attend the CAPT Service To Science Academy in Minneapolis.

Attachment #2: ILI 2006-2007 Budget

SALARY AND FRINGE	ILI Budget
Program Coordinator	21,430
Curriculum Coordinator/Facilitator	37,421
Deputy Director Assistant	2,024
Student Development Specialist	18,469
<i>Total Salaries</i>	79,344
Fringe Benefits	14,165
TOTAL SALARY AND FRINGE	\$93,509
 PROGRAM SUPPLIES	
Session Supplies	600
Facility Rental	1,000
Food/Beverages	5,850
Miscellaneous	500
Service Learning Activities	2,000
Special Events	2,000
Transition Program	2,000
After School Programming	8,000
TOTAL PROGRAM SUPPLIES	\$21,950
 AGENCY OPERATIONS	
Supplies	600
Telephone/Fax	840
Copying	5,000
Postage	1,680
Space Costs	1,845
TOTAL AGENCY OPERATIONS	\$9,965
 TRAVEL	
Professional Travel	4,635
Student Retreats	1,750
TOTAL TRAVEL	\$6,385
 INDIRECT COSTS	
Indirect Costs	23,295
TOTAL INDIRECT COSTS	\$23,295
 CONSULTANT/CONTRACTUAL	
Facilitators	14,115
Contractual - Others	15,000
TOTAL CONSULTANT/CONTRACTUAL	\$29,115
 TOTAL BUDGET	\$184,219

ATTACHMENT #3: 2005-2006 Funds Received

	Funds Received FY 05-06
Grants & Contracts	
Local Government Funding	
Lac du Flambeau Tribal Council (Tribal)	10,000
Vilas County Safe and Stable Families Grant	1,000
Total	\$11,000
State Government Funding	
Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction	123
Total	\$123
Federal Government Funding	
Positive Alternatives Coalition (Drug Free Community)	10,000
Total	\$10,000
Total Government Revenues	\$21,123
School Funding	
Arbor-Vitae/Woodruff Grade School	5,000
CESA 12	57
Gear-Up (UW-Eau Claire)	3,000
Lac du Flambeau Grade School	15,000
Lakeland Union High School	20,000
Minocqua-Hazelhurst-Lake Tomahawk Elementary	5,000
North Lakeland Elementary School-NLEF Foundation	755
North Lakeland Elementary School PTC	1,000
UW-Eau Claire Adolescent & Family Conference	381
UW-La Crosse	250
Northern Tier Uniserv	200
Total School Revenues	\$50,644
Foundation Funding	
Community Mental Health Foundation	10000
H.J. Hagge Foundation	1,500
Nijji Enterprises	5,000
Northwoods United Way	250
Wisconsin Community Fund	1,875
Wisconsin Positive Youth Development Corporation	7,500
Total Foundation Revenues	\$26,125

Corporate Funding	
Local Corporations	
Chippewa Valley Bank	1,000
Citizens Bank	100
EyeCare and EyeWear Associates of Minocqua	100
Folsom Farms, Inc.	100
Howard Young Health Care Foundation	5,000
Lake of the Torches Golf Classic	3,500
Lake of the Torches-Memorabilia Benefit	834
Lakeland Cinema	100
Mama's Supper Club	50
Marshfield Clinic	1,000
Pukall Lumber Foundation	300
Ritchie Lakeland Oil	100
Winger Concrete Inc.	500
Wisconsin Public Service	2,000
Woodruff Ace Hardware, Inc.	1,000
Total	\$ 15,684
State & National Corporations	
American Express Gift Matching Program	1,000
Total	\$ 1,000
Total Corporate Revenues	
\$ 16,684	

State and Local Organizations Funding	
State Organizations	
Wisconsin Indian Education Association	3,000
Total State Organization Revenues	\$ 3,000
Local Community & Faith-Based Organizations	
Community Area Churches (5)	2,850.00
Kiwanis Club	500.00
Lions Clubs (5)	1,350.00
Rotary Clubs	750.00
Total Local Organizations Revenues	\$ 5,450
Total State and Local Organization Revenues	
\$ 8,450	

Total Grants & Contracts	
\$ 123,026	

Earned Revenue	
Friends of ILI Membership Income	\$ 10,781
Total Earned Revenues	\$ 10,781
Other Revenues	
Internships: UW-Madison	300
Speaker Honorariums	0
ILI Emergency Reserve Fund	15,570
Total Other Revenues	\$15,870
Total Revenues	
	26,651
Total Income: Grants, Contracts, Revenues	
	149,676
In-Kind Support	
Schools: Transportation & Substitute Teachers	15,500
Facility Rental	20,800
Food	5,000
Volunteers	35,000
Total In-Kind Support	\$76,300
Total Revenue	\$225,976

Attachment #4: Bibliography

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